

WHY USE NONTOXIC ALTERNATIVES?

There are many reasons to use alternative nontoxic cleaning products—so hang on to your hat....

Money

It is *much* cheaper to make your own products than paying for the chemical engineering and packaging of store-bought products. Consumer Report magazine studies have shown that many nontoxic alternative cleaners work as well or better than commercial cleaners.

Simplicity

You don't really need those 20 cleaning products for your home. Make your own with three simple ingredients to replace most of those bottles and cans under your sink.

Health & Safety

The American Association for Poison Control Centers ranks household cleaning substances among the top human and pet poisons. When you make your own product, you know what's in it. Commercial products are not required to list all ingredients—even if they are harmful. Keep your children and pets safe while keeping your home clean.

Environment

When we pour chemicals down our drains, those chemicals end up in our rivers, streams, lakes, and our drinking water. Water treatment facilities and septic systems do not remove all chemicals. This affects us and aquatic life.

RESOURCES

Bond, Annie B. *Home Enlightenment*. NYC: Rodale, 2005.

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Sandbeck, Ellen. *Green Housekeeping*. Scribner, 2008.

Schoff, Jill Potvin. *Green Up Your Clean Up*. Creative Homeowner, 2008.

Siegel-Maeir, Karyn. *The Naturally Clean Home: 100 Safe and Easy Herbal Formulas for Non-Toxic Cleaning*. Storey Publishing, LLC, 1999.

Search the internet for “green cleaning,” “nontoxic cleaning,” “natural stain removal”....



UPPER VALLEY LAKE SUNAPEE
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- Upper Valley Household Hazardous Waste Committee
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THE BIG THREE



NONTOXIC HOUSECLEANING

with Vinegar,
Baking Soda and Soap

Most ingredients for nontoxic cleaning can be found in the grocery store—though not in the cleaning aisle. Ordinary white vinegar, baking soda, and liquid soap can be made into a wide range of cleaning products for your home.

1. WHITE VINEGAR

You can buy white vinegar in economical gallon jugs. Vinegar is a powerful, acidic sanitizer and deodorizer. It will break down “hard water” mineral buildup, dissolve metal tarnish, and kill bacteria, molds, and other microbes, as well as help whiten the laundry. It has a strong smell (like many cleaners), but the odor will dissipate in a couple hours.



2. BAKING SODA

Sodium bicarbonate or baking soda is a mineral derived from soda ash. It is slightly alkaline and neutralizes odors caused by acids. It's helpful for unclogging drains and neutralizing odors in garbage cans and disposals. Baking soda is slightly abrasive so it can be used for scrubbing sinks, counters, appliances, and bathroom fixtures.



3. LIQUID SOAP

Castile soap is made from oils such as olive, coconut, jojoba, and hemp. Common brands include Dr. Bronner's and Vermont Soap. It is not a detergent—detergents are typically petroleum products. Some liquid soaps have essential oils added for scent and sanitizing power such as lavender, citrus, or mint. Tea tree oil is a natural antiseptic and kills mold. Plain liquid soap can be used to hand wash dishes.



RECIPES USING THE **BIG** THREE

All-Purpose Disinfecting Cleaner

2/3 cup white vinegar
1 tablespoon liquid soap
1 cup warm water
Few drops of your favorite essential oil, optional

In a spray bottle, mix the soap and water first to prevent clumping. Add vinegar.

Countertop and Cutting Board Cleaners

Spray with straight white vinegar to kill mold in wet places. No need to rinse.

Sprinkling baking soda onto a cutting board will absorb odors and provide grit to clean up tougher spills. Wipe down with a damp cloth.

Drains

For a slow drain, pour 1/2 cup of baking soda down the drain followed by 1/2 cup of white vinegar. Leave for 15 minutes. Next, pour a kettle full of boiling water down the drain. For clogged drains, use a plunger, coat hanger, or plumber's snake to clear the clog. Then use the slow drain recipe above.

Soft Scrub for the Bathroom

Depending on the size of your job, place up to 1/2 cup of baking soda into a bowl. Slowly pour liquid soap, stirring constantly until mixture has the consistency of frosting. Add essential oil for scent and anti-fungal properties (e.g. lavender), if desired. Scoop the creamy mixture onto a damp sponge, scrub surface, then rinse.

Toilet Bowl Cleaner

Add one cup of white vinegar to the toilet and scrub bowl with toilet brush and let set until convenient to flush. A cup of vinegar in the tank water provides a second rinsing.

Window and Glass Cleaner

Mix 1/2 cup of white vinegar with 2 cups of water in a spray bottle. If you have been using commercial glass cleaner, this has left a surfactant residue on the glass which can be removed by adding a few drops of liquid soap to your vinegar and water mixture. Dry windows with crumpled up newspaper—just like Mom—or Grandpa.

Fabric Softener

Add 1/2 cup of white vinegar to the rinse cycle to soften clothes and keep them bright. If there is a softener dispenser on your machine, pour in vinegar to the fill line.

Other Recipes

There are many, many nontoxic recipes out there. Go on-line and research your needs such as removing stains from particular fabrics. Have a look at the books on our resource list on this brochure, and check out www.uvhhw.org.

Experiment, save money, reduce the toxicity in the world—and have fun!